

## REMARKS ON DERIVATIONS ON SEMIPRIME RINGS

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**ABSTRACT.** We prove that a semiprime ring  $R$  must be commutative if it admits a derivation  $d$  such that (i)  $xy + d(xy) = yx + d(yx)$  for all  $x, y$  in  $R$ , or (ii)  $xy - d(xy) = yx - d(yx)$  for all  $x, y$  in  $R$ . In the event that  $R$  is prime, (i) or (ii) need only be assumed for all  $x, y$  in some nonzero ideal of  $R$ .

**KEY WORDS AND PHRASES.** Derivation, semiprime ring, prime ring, commutative, central ideal, integral domain, direct sum.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION.

In the past fifteen years, there has been an ongoing interest in derivations on prime or semiprime rings; and many of the results have involved commutativity. (See [1] for a partial bibliography.) In this brief note, we explore the commutativity implications of the existence on  $R$  of a derivation  $d$  satisfying the following:

(\*) there exists a nonzero ideal  $K$  of  $R$  such that either  $xy + d(xy) = yx + d(yx)$  for all  $x, y$  in  $K$ , or  $xy - d(xy) = yx - d(yx)$  for all  $x, y$  in  $K$ .

### 2. THE PRINCIPAL RESULTS.

Our principal results in this note are

**THEOREM 1.** If  $R$  is any prime ring admitting a derivation  $d$  satisfying (\*), then  $R$  is commutative.

**THEOREM 2.** Let  $R$  be a semiprime ring admitting a derivation  $d$  for which either  $xy + d(xy) = yx + d(yx)$  for all  $x, y$  in  $R$  or  $xy - d(xy) = yx - d(yx)$  for all  $x, y$  in  $R$ . Then  $R$  is commutative.

In fact, both of these theorems are consequences of a third theorem, which is reminiscent of the results in [1].

THEOREM 3. If  $R$  is a semiprime ring admitting a derivation  $d$  satisfying (\*), the  $K$  is a central ideal.

### 3. PROOFS.

The proof of Theorem 3 hinges on the following lemma.

LEMMA 1. Let  $R$  be a semiprime ring and  $I$  a nonzero ideal of  $R$ . If  $z$  in  $R$  centralizes the set  $[I, I]$ , then  $z$  centralizes  $I$ .

PROOF. Let  $z$  centralizes  $[I, I]$ . Then for all  $x, y$  in  $I$ , we have  $z[x, y] = [x, y]z$ , which can be rewritten as  $zx[x, y] = x[x, y]z$ ; hence  $[z, x][x, y] = 0$  for all  $x, y$  in  $I$ . Replacing  $y$  by  $yz$ , we get  $[z, x]I[z, x] = \{0\}$ . Since  $I$  is an ideal, it follows that,  $[z, x]IR[z, x]I = \{0\} = I[z, x]RI[z, x]$ , so that  $[z, x]I = I[z, x] = \{0\}$ . Thus,  $[[z, x], x] = 0$  for all  $x$  in  $I$ ; and by Theorem 3 of [2],  $z$  centralizes  $I$ .

For ease of reference, we include a second lemma, which is well-known.

LEMMA 2. (a) If  $R$  is a prime ring with a nonzero central ideal, then  $R$  is commutative.

(b) If  $R$  is a semiprime ring, the center of a nonzero ideal is contained in the center of  $R$ .

PROOF OF THEOREM 3. We suppose first that

$$xy + d(xy) = yx + d(yx) \text{ for all } x, y \text{ in } K, \quad (1)$$

which can be rewritten as

$$[x, y] = -d([x, y]) \text{ for all } x, y \text{ in } K. \quad (2)$$

Now for all  $x, y, z$  in  $K$ , we have  $[x, y]z + d([x, y]z) = z[x, y] + d(z[x, y])$ , which yields

$$[x, y]z + d([x, y])z + [x, y]d(z) = z[x, y] + d(z)[x, y] + zd([x, y]);$$

and applying (2) we conclude that

$$[x, y]d(z) = d(z)[x, y] \text{ for all } x, y, z \text{ in } K. \quad (3)$$

By Lemma 1, we see that  $d(K)$  centralizes  $K$ ; and it follows from (1) that  $[x, y]$  is in the center of  $K$  for all  $x, y$  in  $K$ . Another application of Lemma 1 shows that the ideal  $K$  is commutative; hence by Lemma 2(b),  $K$  is in the center of  $R$ . In the event that  $xy - d(xy) = yx - d(yx)$  for all  $x, y$  in  $K$ , it is equally easy to establish (3), therefore our proof is complete.

Theorem 2 is immediate from Theorem 3, and Theorem 1 follows from Theorem 3 and Lemma 2(a).

We remark, in conclusion, that under the hypotheses of Theorem 3 we cannot hope to prove commutativity of  $R$ . Consider  $R = R_1 \oplus R_2$ , where  $R_1$  is an integral domain,  $R_2$  is a prime ring which is not commutative, and  $d$  is the "direct sum" of derivations on the summands  $R_1$  and  $R_2$ .

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